

Sri Lankan Canadian Heritage Foundation --SLCHF--

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1 Introduction

1.1 Executive Summary

Canada's current method of recognising heritage is based on the contributions of the citizens of that country in Canada.

Canada is home to a large and vibrant Sri Lankan community. Ever since the first Sri Lankans arrived in Canada in the 1950s, Sri Lankan-Canadians have made significant contributions ranging from Civil Service, University Academia, Medical advancements, Engineering Professions, Agriculture/Agro Business, Computer Sciences, Banking, Healthcare, Pharmaceuticals, Arts and Service Industries. Their contribution to Canada is immeasurable. "Aluth Avurudu" (Sinhalese) or "Puthandu" (Tamil) is the celebration of the Sri Lankan New Year and it is the biggest festival in the Sri Lankan community. This auspicious day is celebrated in April, and it signifies new beginnings, and cherishes family and community. We like to highlight the contributions of great Canadians of Sri Lankan origin who contributed to Canada such as Dr. Dilantha Fernando, Dean and Professor of University of Manitoba and Dr. Nimal Rathnayake, Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal winner for research on nutritional effects of dietary fats. You can find the many such contributions at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/v9hzpa1tz0uwmwg/HeritageDayPresentation%20ONLY.pptx?dl=0>

A Sri Lankan Heritage Month will allow Canadians to express their civic pride and embrace the multicultural diversity in Canada. By performing artistic activities, taking part in Canadian celebrations, sharing Canadian values, Sri Lankans will be able to better integrate into the Canadian society with their cultural practices of colorful heritage.

Sri Lanka has a rich and distinct culture dating over 2,500 years. The unique heritage is filled with arts, crafts, music and architecture that has not been seen anywhere else in the world. Sri Lankan events in Canada could provide an opportunity to share this rich cultural and heritage with all Canadians, and provide the younger generations an opportunity to appreciate and revitalize the passion to protect it. We will focus on culture, history, heritage, sports and language aspects when sharing Sri Lankan heritage to Canadians. Since April is a key month in terms of cultural value, we hope to pursue a cultural recognition of April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month in Canada.

There is proof that Heritage recognition in Canada is possible because of:

- a. Sinhalese Heritage Day in Canadian Parliament with MP Chandra Arya and many others in 2019
- b. April as Sri Lanka Heritage Month declaration by City of Ottawa in 2020 and 2021.

1.2 Objectives

- a. To obtain April as Sri Lanka Heritage Month Proclamations in school boards, municipalities, provincial and federal level in a consistent yearly manner.
- b. To assist local Sri Lankan Canadian Associations to navigate the governing bodies to obtain their own proclamations within a given period of time, if required will apply directly or on behalf of an Association.
- c. Organise or assist with Sri Lankan Heritage events

1.3 Scope

The scope of this document is to address:

- 1.2.1 Commemorative Observance – April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month
- 1.2.2 Federal, provincial, municipal, school board level April as Sri Lankan Heritage month recognition programs
- 1.2.3 Key aspects to consider when recognizing Sri Lankan Heritage in Canada
- 1.2.4 Sample letters in Appendix / workflows

1.4 Team

Anura Ferdinand (President)
Prasanna Gunasekera (Secretary)
Nayana De Silva (Treasurer)
Hasaka Rathnamalala (Director Legal Affairs)
Sena Munasinghe (Director Planning)
Rasathma Rathnayake (Director Outreach)
Indumini Jayakody (Director IT/Tele Communications)
Vidun Jayakody (Assistant Director IT/Tele Communications)

1.5 Organisations to liaise with for proclamations and celebrations

- 1. Sri Lanka Canada Association of Ottawa (SLCAO)
City Of Ottawa - April As Sri Lankan Heritage Month in Ottawa proclamation
Anura/Indumini
- 2. Sri Lanka Canada Association of Brampton (SLCAB)
City of Brampton - April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month in Brampton proclamation
Sena/Prasanna
- 3. Canada Sri Lanka Association (Toronto - CSLA)
City of Toronto - April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month in Toronto proclamation
Anura/Sena
- 4. Sinhalese Association of Canada (Toronto - SAC)
Town of Whitby - April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month in Whitby proclamation
Anura/Prasanna
- 5. Sri Lanka United National Association of Canada (Toronto - SLUNA)
City of Mississauga - April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month in Mississauga proclamation
City of Vaughan - April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month in Vaughan proclamation
Sena/Prasanna
- 6. Canadian Sri Lankan Centre for Social Harmony (CSLCSH)
City of Windsor - April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month in Windsor proclamation
Prasanna/Vidun
- 7. Canadian Sri Lankan Parents Association (CSLPA)
Toronto District School Board - April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month in TDSB proclamation
Anura/Indumini
- 8. Friends of Sri Lanka in Manitoba
City of Winnipeg - April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month in Winnipeg proclamation
Hasaka/Prasanna
- 9. Friends of Sri Lanka in Montreal
City of Montreal - April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month in Montreal proclamation
Indumini/Vidun

10. Friends of Sri Lanka in Calgary
City of Calgary - April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month in Calgary proclamation
Anura/Prasanna
11. Sri lankan Canadian Heritage Foundation - Ontario Provincial proclamation
12. Sri lankan Canadian Heritage Foundation - Federal proclamation

1.6 Assignment of governing bodies/organisations:

Federal: Anura Ferdinand/Nayana De Silva

Provincial: Prasanna Gunasekera/ Sena Munasinghe

City: Rasathma Rathnayake/Indumini Jayakody

School Board: Rasathma Rathnayake/Vidun Jayakody/

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/SriLankanheritageInCanada>

Email:

slcanadaheritage@gmail.com

2 Commemorative Observances

As a country that graciously accepts cultural diversity, there is significant importance in ensuring that all citizens keep their identities, and take pride in their ancestry while having a sense of community. A commemorative observance of April As Sri Lankan Heritage Month is an opportunity to educate Canadians on the long and rich history of Sri Lankan Canadians and their contributions to Canadian society. There are two main legislations to refer when addressing commemorative observances in Canada.

2.1 Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Section Twenty-seven of the Charter states that:^[58]

This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians.

Section Fifteen of the Charter that covers equality states:^[63]

Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

2.2 Canadian Multiculturalism Act

The 1988 [Canadian Multiculturalism Act](#) affirms the policy of the government to ensure that every Canadian receives equal treatment by the government which respects and celebrates diversity.^[58] The "Act" in general recognizes:^[64]

- Canada's multicultural heritage and that that heritage must be protected.
- The [rights of indigenous peoples](#).
- English and French remain the only [official languages](#), however other languages may be used.
- [Social equality](#) within society and under the law regardless of race, colour, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, creed or religion.
- [Minorities' rights](#) to enjoy their cultures.

Section 3 (1) of the act states:^[58]

It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Government of Canada to

(a) recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage

(b) to recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism is a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity and that it provides an invaluable resource in the shaping of Canada's future

3 Heritage Recognition by governing bodies

Canada is home to federal, provincial, municipal and school board level governing bodies. All of which offer some level of heritage recognitions. While there are significant differences in requests depending on the province, city and school board, almost all of them offer support via their official websites or helpline or member of the representative body eg. Mp, MPP, City Councillor or School board trustee.

3.1 Federal

In April 27th 2019 Honourable MP Chandra Arya hosted the very first Sinhalese Heritage Day in Parliament of Canada, hosting around 700 individuals. Following the event, MP Arya made a statement in the Canadian Parliament as follows:

Sinhalese Heritage Day
Statements By Members

May 3rd, 2019 / 10:55 a.m.

Liberal



Chandra Arya Nepean, ON

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to host the first very successful Sinhalese Heritage Day on Parliament Hill on April 27 with about 500 Sinhalese Canadians.

I would like to thank Edward Anura Ferdinand and his team at the Sri Lanka Canada Association of Ottawa for their dedication in organizing this.

I would also like to recognize the SLCAO Seniors Group, the Hilda Jayewardenearamaya temple of Ottawa, the Sri Lanka United National Association of Canada in Toronto, the Sinhalese Association of Canada, the Canada Sri Lanka Association of Toronto, the Sri Lanka Canada Association of the Atlantic Region, the Sri Lankan Association of Manitoba, the Sri Lanka Canada Association of Montreal and the Toronto Sri Lankan Student Alumni Alliance.

The event showed that while integrating into Canadian society, we do keep in touch with our heritage.

Hansard ref: <https://openparliament.ca/debates/2019/5/3/chandra-arya-1/>

Video: https://m.facebook.com/watch/?v=417028415512587&_rdr

3.2 Provincial

As a result of the petition provided to MPP John Fraser on the 17th of August 2019 followed by a second petition on the 6th of December 2019, MPP Fraser presented to the parliament and succeeded to convert the petition into Sessional Paper P-233 on June 24th 2020 (See Appendix C)

Petition1: <https://www.facebook.com/SriLankanheritageInCanada/posts/112733093429527>

Petition2: <https://www.facebook.com/SriLankanheritageInCanada/posts/156740049028831>

MPP Fraser's Presentation:

<https://www.facebook.com/SrilankanassociatesinCanada/posts/1670423089825916>

3.3 Municipal

Municipal level Heritage declarations vary. While Ottawa, Toronto and Brampton cities have Heritage recognitions, it is not clear how other cities have done so. It is advisable to check City website or their helpline.

In Ottawa, as a result of a petition handed over to City Councillor Riley Brockington on the August 19, 2019, he was able to declare April as a Sri Lankan Heritage Month in March of 2020.

3.4 School Boards

While Toronto District School Board offers Heritage Month recognitions, Ottawa does not seem to be offering the same efforts. It would be best to contact individual school boards to confirm their availability of heritage recognition.

Method:

Contact School Board or look up website and submit a version of Appendix A or start with a petition to a School Board trustee.

4 Key aspects when celebrating Sri Lankan Heritage in an event for Proclamation

Recognition of Canadians of Sri Lankan origin who have contributed to the community is a main aspect of proclamation of a Heritage in Canada, while celebrating the rich culture and traditions shared with Canadians. The following action items are to be considered when celebrating an event that has an aspect to celebrate Sri Lankan Heritage in Canada. These items are aimed at educating the younger generations and other Canadians on the rich cultural heritage and traditions, history of Sri Lanka. While most of current Sri Lankan events contain one or more of the following, some can add these when celebrating Sri Lankan Heritage in Canada.

1. Append or add "April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month" in your flyer/communications about the event
2. Recognition of Canadians of Sri Lankan origin who have contributed to the community
There is no minimum or maximum number, use discretion where necessary. The Powerpoint presentation used in the 2019 Sinhalese Heritage Day in Parliament can be found in this link can be used as a template:
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/v9hzpa1tz0uwmwg/HeritageDayPresentation%20ONLY.pptx?dl=0>
3. Display of Language use - While there is no rule of the amount of language, it is expected that a mix of English, Sinhalese, Tamil and French (official languages of Sri Lanka and Canada)
4. Display of Sri Lankan Cultural Items - Dancing, drama, singing, kavia, poems, art, music
5. Invitation of political representatives - It is important to share Sri Lankan culture, traditions and heritage with the lawmakers as they will be required for the official proclamation approval be it at school board level, municipal level, provincial level and federal level. Invite as many depending on the scope of your event. Even if they do not show up, keep inviting because they need to be aware of the celebrations taking place.
6. Playing of Canadian and Sri Lankan National anthems. In some cases i.e. Federal events, only Canadian anthem, may be played at the discretion of the Federal MP.
7. Presentation of Sri Lankan history - This is aimed at educating the newer generations and others in Canada on how Sri Lankans live and lived. Important to focus on the great traditions, culture and heritage. No room should be available for any political or any controversial issues.

Appendix A: April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month City of Ottawa (Sample)

SRI LANKAN HERITAGE MONTH

April 2021

WHEREAS, Ottawa is home to a large and vibrant Sri Lankan community; and

WHEREAS, since the first Sri Lankans arrived in Canada in the 1950s, Sri Lankan-Canadians have made significant contributions to many industries ranging from Civil Service, University Academia, Medical and Engineering Professions, Agriculture and Agri Business, Computer Sciences, Banking, Arts and Crafts, Service, Manufacturing and many other Industries. Their contribution to Canada and to Ottawa is immeasurable; and

WHEREAS, “Aluth Avurudu” or New Year is the biggest of all celebratory festivals in the Sri Lankan community and it falls in April; and

WHEREAS, Sri Lankan Heritage Month will bring Canadians together to express their civic pride and to express their commitment to Canada by performing artistic activities, taking part in Canadian celebrations, sharing Canadian values and enriching the Canadian society with their practices of colourful heritage;

THEREFORE, I, Jim Watson, Mayor of the City of Ottawa, do hereby proclaim **April 2021 Sri Lankan Heritage Month** in Ottawa.

MOIS DU PATRIMOINE SRI-LANKAIS

Avril 2021

ATTENDU QU'Ottawa abrite une communauté sri-lankaise importante et dynamique; et

ATTENDU QUE depuis l'arrivée des premiers Sri-Lankais au Canada dans les années 1950, les Canadiens d'origine sri-lankaise ont apporté d'importantes contributions dans divers domaines allant de la fonction publique aux universités, en passant par les professions médicales et l'ingénierie, l'agriculture et l'agroalimentaire, les sciences informatiques, les activités bancaires, l'artisanat d'art, les industries de services, la fabrication et de nombreuses autres industries. Leur contribution au Canada et à Ottawa est incommensurable; et

ATTENDU QUE « Aluth Avurudu » ou Nouvel An est le plus grand de tous les festivals dans la communauté sri-lankaise et qu'il tombe en avril; et

ATTENDU QUE le Mois du patrimoine sri-lankais réunira les Canadiens pour exprimer leur fierté civique et leur engagement envers le Canada en effectuant des activités artistiques, en participant à des célébrations canadiennes, en partageant les valeurs canadiennes et en enrichissant la société canadienne avec leurs pratiques patrimoniales hautes en couleur;

PAR CONSÉQUENT, je, Jim Watson, maire de la Ville d'Ottawa, proclame par la présente, **avril 2021 Mois du patrimoine sri-lankais** à Ottawa.

Jim Watson
Mayor / Maire

Ref:

https://slcaottawa.com/site/slcao-community/canadas-capital-declares-april-as-sri-lankan-heritage-month/?fbclid=IwAR2TBrbA4CLJQKc4Db0TW-MfDvAlgKZi9pmpd9YfgwJmrM-ZIAlyUR_8mMs



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PAR CONSÉQUENT, je, Jim Watson, maire de la Ville d'Ottawa, proclame par la présente, **avril 2020 Mois du patrimoine sri-lankais** à Ottawa.





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WHEREAS, "Aluth Avurudu" or New Year is the biggest of all celebratory festivals in the Sri Lankan community and it falls in April; and

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Jim Watson
Mayor / Maire

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PAR CONSÉQUENT, je, Jim Watson, maire de la Ville d'Ottawa, proclame par la présente, **avril 2021 Mois du patrimoine sri-lankais** à Ottawa.



Appendix B: April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month Province of Ontario (Sample)

WHEREAS, Ontario is home to a large and vibrant Sri Lankan community;
and

WHEREAS, since the first Sri Lankans arrived in Canada in the 1950s, Sri Lankan-Canadians have made significant contributions ranging from Civil Service, University Academia, Medical and Engineering Professions, Agriculture and Agro Business, Computer Sciences, Banking , Healthcare, Pharmaceuticals, Arts and Crafts and Service Industries. Their contribution to Canada and to Ontario province is immeasurable:

and

WHEREAS, “Aluth Avurudu” or “Puthandu” or New Year is the biggest of all celebratory festivals in the Sri Lankan community and it falls in April;

and

WHEREAS, Sri Lankan Heritage Month will bring Canadians together to express their civic pride and to express their commitment to Canada by performing artistic activities, taking part in Canadian celebrations, sharing Canadian values and better integrate into the Canadian society with their cultural practices of colorful heritage.

Ref:

<https://www.facebook.com/SriLankanheritageInCanada/posts/156740049028831>

Appendix C: Sessional Paper 233

Ministry of Heritage,
Sport, Tourism and
Culture Industries

Minister

6th Floor
438 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

Ministère des Industries du
patrimoine, du sport, du
tourisme et de la culture

Ministre

6^e étage
438, avenue University
Toronto (Ontario) M5G 2K8



Response to Petition No. **233**
42nd Parliament, 1st Session

Tabled:
KD

OCT 05 2020

Sessional Paper No.P-233

P-233 Petition relating to Sri Lankan heritage month (Sessional Paper No. 233)
(Tabled by MPP Fraser, June 17, 2020)

Response

Thank you for your petition and your request that Ontario name April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month.

As Culture Minister, I am leading our government's priority of protecting and preserving Ontario's unique and diverse cultural heritage.

I appreciate you bringing this important cultural matter to my attention and enlightening me about Ontario's vibrant Sri Lankan community. We will take this request under advisement and should a Private Member's Bill be introduced on this matter we will monitor its progress through the House.

I look forward to learning more about the many contributions of the Sri Lankan community to our province.

Kindest regards,



Lisa MacLeod

Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries

Appendix D: Sample Letter to City Councillor or MPP

17 August 2019

Honorable John Fraser, MPP Ottawa South/
Interim Leader Ontario Liberal Party
1828 Bank Street, Ottawa,
Ontario, K1V 7Y6

Honorable John Fraser,

RE: APRIL 2020 AND BEYOND, APRIL AS SRI LANKAN HERITAGE MONTH

We are delighted to send you herewith the petition and the declaration seeking proclamation to name "April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month in Ontario", in recognition of the valuable services rendered to the Canadian society by the Canadians of Sri Lankan origin.

Since early 1940s Sri Lankans have been migrating to Canada as skilled immigrants and students and subsequently, many of the, on merits of their qualifications, were offered full-fledged citizenship in Canada for which we are greatly beholden to the Canadian government.

The majority of the Sri Lankan Canadians living in Canada are densely concentrated in the province of Ontario to navigate their destiny. There are university professors, scientists, gold medalists of Queen's Golden Jubilee, teachers in all school boards, doctors, many in healthcare and various service fields, including Army and Police at highest echelons. In addition, there are many small and medium scale entrepreneurs actively contributing to the betterment of the Canadian economy.

We believe that this declaration will create a fitting opportunity to showcase the contributions made by the Sri Lankan Canadians to the national and educational advancement especially of the Ontario Region and Canada in general.

We fervently hope that this declaration will create a forum for Sri Lankan Canadians to celebrate the event and in the long run positively impacting our younger generations to follow the footsteps of their predecessors.

Lastly, our counterpart organizations in other cities in Canada too join us in echoing our utmost gratitude to the Ontario government for the excellent corporation provided to us in this connection.

Sincerely,

Anura Ferdinand
President
Sri Lanka Canada Association of Ottawa
Encl.

Appendix A: The list of signatories to the petition

Appendix B: The proclamation

Appendix C: A list of noteworthy contributions made by Sri Lankan Canadians

Appendix D: Souvenir made to mark the Sinhalese Heritage Day celebrated in Parliament.

Appendix E: A copy of Sri Lankan tabloid printed in Toronto

Ref:

<https://www.facebook.com/SriLankanheritageInCanada/posts/112733093429527>

Appendix E: Provincial legislation and policies

All ten of [Canada's provinces](#) have some form of multiculturalism policy.^[67] At present, six of the ten provinces – [British Columbia](#), [Alberta](#), [Saskatchewan](#), [Manitoba](#), [Quebec](#), and [Nova Scotia](#) – have enacted multiculturalism legislation. In eight provinces – British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec, [New Brunswick](#), [Prince Edward Island](#), and Nova Scotia – a multiculturalism advisory council reports to the minister responsible for multiculturalism. In Alberta, the Alberta Human Rights Commission performs the role of multiculturalism advisory council. In Nova Scotia, the Act is implemented by both a Cabinet committee on multiculturalism and advisory councils. Ontario has an official multicultural policy and the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration is responsible for promoting social inclusion, civic and community engagement and recognition. The Government of [Newfoundland and Labrador](#) launched the province's policy on multiculturalism in 2008 and the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills leads its implementation.

While the territorial governments do not have multiculturalism policies per se, they have human rights acts that prohibit discrimination based on, among other things, race, colour, ancestry, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed or religion. In [Whitehorse](#), the Multicultural Centre of the [Yukon](#) provides services to immigrants.^[67]

British Columbia

[British Columbia](#) legislated the *Multiculturalism Act* in 1993.^[67] The purposes of this act (s. 2) are:^[68]

- to recognize that the diversity of British Columbians as regards race, cultural heritage, religion, ethnicity, ancestry and place of origin is a fundamental characteristic of the society of British Columbia that enriches the lives of all British Columbians;
- to encourage respect for the multicultural heritage of British Columbia;
- to promote racial harmony, cross cultural understanding and respect and the development of a community that is united and at peace with itself;
- to foster the creation of a society in British Columbia in which there are no impediments to the full and free participation of all British Columbians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of British Columbia.

Alberta

[Alberta](#) primarily legislated the *Alberta Cultural Heritage Act* in 1984 and refined it with the *Alberta Multiculturalism Act* in 1990.^[67] The current legislation pertaining to multiculturalism is *The Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act* that passed in 1996.^[67] This current legislation deals with discrimination in race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, age, marital status and sexual orientation, among other things.^[69] Alberta Human Rights chapter A-25.5 states:^[70]

- multiculturalism describes the diverse racial and cultural composition of Alberta society and its importance is recognized in Alberta as a fundamental principle and a matter of public policy;
- it is recognized in Alberta as a fundamental principle and as a matter of public policy that all Albertans should share in an awareness and appreciation of the diverse racial and cultural

composition of society and that the richness of life in Alberta is enhanced by sharing that diversity; and

- it is fitting that these principles be affirmed by the Legislature of Alberta in an enactment whereby those equality rights and that diversity may be protected.

Saskatchewan

[Saskatchewan](#) was the first Canadian province to adopt legislation on multiculturalism.^[67] This piece of legislation was called *The Saskatchewan Multiculturalism Act* of 1974, but has since been replaced by the new, revised *Multiculturalism Act* (1997).^[67] The purposes of this act (s. 3) are similar to those of British Columbia:^[71]

- to recognize that the diversity of Saskatchewan people with respect to race, cultural heritage, religion, ethnicity, ancestry and place of origin is a fundamental characteristic of Saskatchewan society that enriches the lives of all Saskatchewan people;
- to encourage respect for the multicultural heritage of Saskatchewan;
- to foster a climate for harmonious relations among people of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds without sacrificing their distinctive cultural and ethnic identities;
- to encourage the continuation of a multicultural society.

The [motto of the province of Saskatchewan](#), adopted in 1986, is *Multis e gentibus vires* ("from many peoples, strength" or "out of many peoples, strength").^[72]

Manitoba

[Manitoba](#)'s first piece of legislation on multiculturalism was the *Manitoba Intercultural Council Act* in 1984.^[67] However, in the summer on 1992, the province developed a new provincial legislation called the *Multiculturalism Act*.^[67] The purposes of this act (s. 2) are to:^[73]

- recognize and promote understanding that the cultural diversity of Manitoba is a strength of and a source of pride to Manitobans;
- recognize and promote the right of all Manitobans, regardless of culture, religion or racial background, to: (i) equal access to opportunities, (ii) participate in all aspects of society, and (iii) respect for their cultural values; and
- enhance the opportunities of Manitoba's multicultural society by acting in partnership with all cultural communities and by encouraging cooperation and partnerships between cultural communities

Ontario

[Ontario](#) had a policy in place in 1977 that promoted cultural activity, but formal legislation for a Ministry of Citizenship and Culture (now known as Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration) only came to fruition in 1982.^[67] The *Ministry of Citizenship and Culture Act* (1990) (s. 4) states its purpose:^[74]

- to encourage full, equal and responsible citizenship among the residents of Ontario;
- recognizing the pluralistic nature of Ontario society, to stress the full participation of all Ontarians as equal members of the community, encouraging the sharing of cultural heritage while affirming those elements held in common by all residents;

- to ensure the creative and participatory nature of cultural life in Ontario by assisting in the stimulation of cultural expression and cultural preservation;
- to foster the development of individual and community excellence, enabling Ontarians to better define the richness of their diversity and the shared vision of their community.

Quebec

Further information: [Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms](#)

[Quebec](#) differs from the rest of the nine provinces in that its policy focuses on "[interculturalism](#)"- rather than multiculturalism,^{[75][76][77]} where diversity is strongly encouraged,^[78] but only under the notion that it is within the framework that establishes French as the public language.^[79] Immigrant children must attend French language schools; most signage in English-only is banned (but bilingual signage is common in many communities).^[67]

In 1990, Quebec released a [White paper](#) called *Lets Build Quebec Together: A Policy Statement on Integration and Immigration* which reinforced three main points.^[80]

- Quebec is a French-speaking society
- Quebec is a democratic society in which everyone is expected to contribute to public life
- Quebec is a pluralistic society that respects the diversity of various cultures from within a democratic framework

In 2005, Quebec passed legislation to develop the *Ministry of Immigration and Cultural Communities*, their functions were:^[67]

- to support cultural communities in order to facilitate their full participation in Quebec society
- to foster openness to pluralism; and
- to foster closer intercultural relations among the people of Quebec.

In 2015, when the [Coalition Avenir Quebec](#) (CAQ) took a [nationalist turn](#), they advocated for "exempting Quebec from the requirements of multiculturalism."^[81] One of the key priorities for the CAQ when elected in [2018 Quebec election](#) was reducing the number of immigrants, to 40,000 annually; a 20 per cent reduction.^[82]

New Brunswick

[New Brunswick](#) first introduced their multicultural legislation in 1986.^[67] The policy is guided by four principles: equality, appreciation, preservation of cultural heritages and participation.^[83] In the 1980s the provincial government developed a Ministerial Advisory Committee to provide assistance to the minister of Business in New Brunswick, who is in turn responsible for settlement and multicultural communities.^[67]

Nova Scotia

[Nova Scotia](#) introduced their multicultural legislation, the *Act to Promote and Preserve Multiculturalism*, in 1989.^[67] The purpose of this Act is (s. 3).^[84]

- encouraging recognition and acceptance of multiculturalism as an inherent feature of a pluralistic society;

- establishing a climate for harmonious relations among people of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds without sacrificing their distinctive cultural and ethnic identities;
- encouraging the continuation of a multicultural society as a mosaic of different ethnic groups and cultures

Prince Edward Island

[Prince Edward Island](#) introduced their legislation on multiculturalism, the *Provincial Multicultural Policy*, in 1988.^[67] This policies objectives were (s. 4):^[85]

- serve to indicate that the province embraces the multicultural reality of Canadian society and acknowledges that Prince Edward Island has a distinctive multicultural heritage
- acknowledge the intrinsic worth and continuing contribution of al Prince Edward Islanders regardless of race, religion ethnicity, linguistic origin or length of residency.
- serve as an affirmation of Human Rights for all Prince Edward Islanders and as a complement to the equality of rights guaranteed in the P.E.I. Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
- encourage specific legislative, political and social commitments to multiculturalism in Prince Edward Island

Newfoundland and Labrador

[Newfoundland and Labrador](#) first legislated their Policy on Multiculturalism in 2008.^[67] Some of the policies are to:^[86]

- ensure that relevant policies and procedures of provincial programs and practices reflect, and consider the changing needs of all cultural groups;
- lead in developing, sustaining and enhancing programs and services based on equality for all, notwithstanding racial, religious, ethnic, national and social origin;
- provide government workplaces that are free of discrimination and that promote equality of opportunity for all persons accessing employment positions within the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador;
- support multicultural initiatives by enhancing partnerships with culturally-diverse communities and provincial departments and agencies

Appendix F - Highlights of the Sri Lankan Heritage

Architectural wonders:

- Sigiriya, Mirisavetiya, Thuparama etc.

Festivities:

- Wesak, New Year, Thaipongal etc.

Religious Harmony:

- Kovils, Temples, Mosques, Churches, Sri Pada/Adams Peak,

Arts and Culture:

- Kandy Perahera, Katharagama celebrations (Sinhala and Tamil)

Appendix G - Sample Invitation Letter to a politician

Please use correct spelling, full name and address of the politician. Include your name, phone number and address. In the letter please include a draft program.

March 3rd , 2016

His Worship Jim Watson
Mayor of Ottawa
City Hall
110 Laurier Avenue West,
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1

Sinhala Tamil New Year Invitation – Sri Lanka-Canada Association of Ottawa

Dear Sir,

The Executive Committee of the Sri Lanka-Canada Association of Ottawa (SLCAO) is pleased to invite you as a guest of Honour to attend the 40th Anniversary Sinhala and Tamil New Year Celebrations on the 23rd of April 6:20pm onwards at the Hellanic Reception Hall, 1315 Prince of Wales Drive, Ottawa.

This is the premier Sri Lankan event in Canada to present Sri Lankan culture. We will also be celebrating April as Sri Lankan Heritage Month. Usually this event is attended by around 400 guests including many Canadians of Sri Lankan origin.

As our Guest of Honour, we would be grateful if you could arrive at 6:15 p.m., to take part in the opening ceremony. If you are unable to attend the opening ceremony, please let us know if you can be present to witness the cultural program. We would appreciate it very much if you would RSVP your attendance by email or phone using the contact information given below.

Thank you in advance. We look forward to your positive response.

Sincerely,

Anura Ferdinand
President,
Sri Lanka Canada Association of Ottawa
Tel: XXXXX
Email: xxxx@xxxxx.com